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6. (amended) The system according to [any of the claims] claim 1 [to 5],
wherein said at least one transport mechanism (50, 50') travels between plural
ones of said spurs (44, 44').
7. (amended) The system according to [any of the claims] claim 1 [to 6];
wherein said at least one transport mechanism (50, 50') raises a subjacent cart
(52) associated with that spur (44, 44') to the level of that spur (44, 44') and moves
containers (94) directly from the spur (44, 44') to the cart (52).
8. (amended) The system according to [any of the claims] claim 1 [to 7],
wherein said transport mechanism (50, 50') includes an extendable support
member (54) and a vertical lift (56), said extendable support member (54) is
adapted to retrieving containers (94) from said at least one of said spurs (44, 44')
and inserting containers (94) to the associated cart (52) and said vertical lift (56)
adapted to moving said support member (54) between the vertical level of said
one of said spurs (44, 44') and the vertical level of the associated cart (52).
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11. (amended) The system according to claim 9 [or 10],
wherein said vertical lift (56) elevates said fingers (80) upwardly in order to
retrieve a container (94) from said one of said spurs (44, 44') and elevates said
fingers (80) downwardly in order to insert a container (94) to the associated cart
(52).
12. (amended) The system according to [claims] claim 8 [to 11],
wherein said extendable support member (54) is extended according to a
controlled acceleration profile.

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- Sub B4/14. (amended) The system according to claim 8 [to 13],
wherein said vertical lift (56) is servo controlled.
15. (amended) The system according to claim 1 [to 14],
including a plurality of said transport mechanisms (50, 50'),
wherein each of said transport mechanisms (50, 50') is inhibited from operation
when a cart (52) serviced by that transport mechanism (50, 50') is being replaced.
16. (amended) The system according to claim [1 to] 15,
wherein other transport mechanisms (50, 50') are not inhibited from operation
when one of said transport mechanisms (50, 50') is inhibited from operation.
17. (amended) The system according to claim 1 [to 16],
wherein said conveying surface is defined by a plurality of
powered rollers.
- Sub B5/19. (amended) The system according to according to [any of the claims] claim 1 [to 18],
wherein each of said diverters (42) is a pop-up diverter.
20. (amended) The system according to claim 1 [to 19],
wherein said spurs (44, 44') are arranged on both sides of said conveying surface
and wherein each of said diverters (42) is bidirectional.
21. (amended) The system according to [any of the claims] claim 1 [to 20],
including an alignment device (102) positioned adjacent each of said carts (52)
which aligns containers (94) being inserted to the associated cart (52).

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23. (amended) The system according to [any of the claims] claim 9 [to 22],
wherein said fingers (80) are extendable horizontally in order to engage a
container (94).

24. (amended) The system according to [any of the claims] claim 9 [to 22],
wherein said extendable support member (54) further includes a stripper member
(76) extendable horizontally independently of said fingers (80) in order to slide
containers (94) off of said fingers (80).

25. (amended) The system according to [any of claims] claim 1 [to 24],
including a plurality of cart areas each having an enclosure (96) with a movable
gate (98) that can be selectively opened to allow other carts (52) in other cart
areas to be loaded while one cart (52) is being removed.

29. (amended) The method according to claim [27 or 28] 26,
wherein said sorting containers includes
providing a sortation conveyor (36, 36') having a main line defined by a conveying
surface and a plurality of spurs (44, 44') positioned along said main line and
further includes diverting containers (94) from said conveying surface to spurs
(44, 44') at said particular locations.

30. (amended) The method according to [any of the claims] claim 26 [to 29],
wherein said transporting containers (94) includes positioning an associated cart
(52) below the associated location and causing relative movement between
containers (94) at the particular location and the associated cart (52).